

PURPOSE

The California Arts Council was established in January 1976 to:

- ☛ Encourage artistic awareness, participation and expression;
- ☛ Help independent local groups develop their own arts programs;
- ☛ Promote the employment of Californians skilled in the arts;
- ☛ Provide for the exhibition of art works in public buildings throughout California; and
- ☛ Enlist the aid of all state agencies in the task of ensuring the fullest expression of California's artistic potential.

MISSION

To advance California through the arts and creativity.

VISION

The California Arts Council works for a broad public understanding and appreciation of the positive impact of the arts in enriching the cultural, economic, and intellectual life of our communities and schools.

The California Arts Council champions:

- ☛ Artistic excellence;
- ☛ Equal access to the arts for all state residents;
- ☛ Equitable arts resource allocation;
- ☛ Integration of the arts into the educational curriculum and promotion of life-long learning;
- ☛ Advocacy for adequate funding and support for the arts;
- ☛ Preservation and development of the state's diverse artistic and cultural heritage;
- ☛ Collaboration with the state's public and private sectors; and
- ☛ Expansion of the arts in California.

THE FUTURE

The California Arts Council recognizes that without arts education in schools a high percentage of Californians will never be exposed to the arts. Over a generation or two, the intrinsic - and practical - value of the arts could be lost to many, impoverishing our citizens in ways large and small. The Council's Strategic Plan reaffirms the agency's commitment to arts in education and emphasizes the importance of sequential arts instruction for grades K-12. The plan will guide the Council's efforts for the next three to five years toward providing small grants, implementing special initiatives, working with our partners to advance the arts throughout the state, and ensuring at least 50 percent of the Council's program funds support arts in education.

IN RECOGNITION

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INTRODUCTION

Many state arts agencies, including the California Arts Council, have experienced significant budget reductions in recent years. We responded by conducting a critical assessment of our practices and priorities. We also evaluated resources, examined alternatives, and conducted strategic planning. The California Arts Council recognized that it must develop new strategies to maintain its mission and remain relevant to its authorizers – the Administration, the Legislature, and the Public. The Council met publicly over a period of six months – September 2005 to March 2006 – following in April 2006 with eight focus group sessions and an online questionnaire. Through this process, the Council developed a strategic plan that will guide the agency for the next three to five years.



The strategic plan, adopted by the Council in May 2006, has three main components: **public awareness** of the arts, **advocacy** for the arts, and **programs** that emphasize the importance of arts education in California schools.

KEY OBJECTIVES

PUBLIC AWARENESS

- ☞ Increase the public's understanding of how the arts strengthen the state's culture, communities and economy.
- ☞ Encourage more Californians to participate in the arts in their communities.
- ☞ Position the California Arts Council as the public's arts agency to promote, expand, diversify, and deepen the role of the arts in the state.

ADVOCACY

- ☞ Create and maintain a favorable authorizing environment for the arts in California.

PROGRAMS

- ☞ Develop public value-driven programs that emphasize support for arts in education.
- ☞ Ensure that at least 50 percent of California Arts Council's program funds are allocated to arts in education.
- ☞ Support the state's infrastructure organizations, statewide service networks, convenings, initiatives, and implementation of the other components of the strategic plan.

2006-07 PROGRAMS

PROGRAMS IN 2006-2007 INCLUDE:

- ♦ **Artists in Schools** – Support for arts organizations that partner with schools and/or school districts to facilitate artists-in-residence activities in the classroom and after-school programs.
- ♦ **Creating Public Value** – Support for arts organizations in rural or underserved areas to implement projects making a positive contribution to their communities.
- ♦ **Statewide Service Networks** – Support for discipline-based arts service organizations and statewide arts networks to strengthen their constituencies and promote the public value of the arts in their communities.
- ♦ **State-Local Partnership** – Support for local arts agencies designated by county Boards of Supervisors to provide arts in local communities.
- ♦ **My California Story Slam** – Encourages educators to explore creative writing in their high school classrooms and to draw upon the expressive skills of their students.
- ♦ **Poetry Out Loud** – National recitation contest that encourages high school students to experience poetry through memorization, performance, and competition. Poetry Out Loud is an initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).
- ♦ **American Masterpieces: California** – An initiative of the NEA developed to introduce Americans to the best of their artistic and cultural legacy. Two tours are being promoted for 2007-08 presentations in California: *American Tap Masterpieces -The Hollywood Journey*, and *Música Festiva de las Misiones*.